

PRESS RELEASE

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Madison, Wisconsin -- Erik C. Peterson, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Woodville Warehousing and Distributing, LLC (Woodville), of Woodville, Wis., was sentenced yesterday by U.S. Magistrate Judge Stephen L. Crocker to one year of probation and ordered to pay a \$4,000 fine for its role in contaminating and adulterating butter that was processed and held for sale at the warehouse, and later shipped in interstate commerce. Woodville pleaded guilty, through its owner Ronald Reik, to the misdemeanor charge on August 29, 2008.

The evidence showed that on May 16, 2003, an inspector working for the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture went to Woodville following an anonymous tip that Woodville may be engaging in unlicensed food processing. The inspector found that Woodville was indeed engaging in an unlicensed butter processing operation.

The inspector specifically noted with respect to the condition of the butter, that the primary, secondary and tertiary packaging was exposed to environmental contamination and that dark particles appeared in the butter itself. In addition, the inspector found that some of the boxes containing butter had stickers on them indicating the butter was "inedible" and therefore not fit for human consumption.

Finally, the inspector noted that there were no hand washing stations and that the equipment being used was not approved for dairy processing.

At that time, approximately 86,000 pounds of butter had already been shipped from Woodville to Minnesota. The inspector put a hold on the 200,000 pounds of butter that remained at Woodville in connection with this operation.

During the plea hearing, Ronald Reik admitted that during an approximately three-week period in May 2003, Woodville engaged in the above-described butter processing operation on behalf of dairy traders working for North Central Companies (NCC) in Minnesota. Those traders, Mark Anderson and Steven Perkins, have separately pleaded to criminal misdemeanors and are scheduled to be sentenced December 16, 2008.

The charges against Woodville were the result of an investigation conducted by the Food and Drug Administration, Office of Criminal Investigations, and Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, with assistance from the Iowa and Minnesota Departments of Agriculture. The prosecution of the case has been handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Laura A. Przybylinski Finn.

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